Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application; the claims are not amended.

1. (Previously Presented) A system for processing prescription requests, comprising:

a first pharmacy prescription processing subsystem; and

a central fill prescription processing subsystem coupled to the first pharmacy prescription processing subsystem and a second pharmacy subsystem by a transmission medium, the first pharmacy prescription processing subsystem:

receiving a plurality of prescription requests;

creating a queue of prescription requests from the received plurality of prescription requests, each prescription request in the queue eligible to be filled by a central fill inventory remote from the first pharmacy prescription processing subsystem;

converting the queue of prescription requests to a transmission format; and

transmitting the converted queue of prescription requests to the central fill prescription processing subsystem by the transmission medium; and

the central fill prescription processing subsystem:

receiving the converted queue of prescription requests with the transmission format;

converting the queue of prescription requests from the transmission format to a processing format;

filling a plurality of prescription requests in the queue of prescription requests from the central fill inventory; and

dispensing a plurality of drugs from the central fill inventory via one or more shipments, the dispensed plurality of drugs associated with the plurality of filled prescription requests.

2. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein the transmission medium comprises at least one Unix Tunnel Daemon.

3. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein the transmission medium comprises at least one STP Daemon.

4. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein the transmission format comprises a packet data format.

5. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein the pharmacy prescription processing subsystem operates in a TCP/IP network.

6. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, further comprising an IVR system for entering at least one of the plurality of prescription requests to the pharmacy prescription processing subsystem.

7. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, further comprising:

a PDX Host system coupled to the pharmacy prescription processing subsystem; and

an NHIN system coupled to the PDX Host system and the central fill prescription processing subsystem.

8. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, further comprising a billing subsystem coupled to the pharmacy prescription processing subsystem, the billing subsystem operable to process a claim for payment for at least one of the plurality of prescription requests.

9. (Previously Presented) A pharmacy prescription processing system, comprising:

means for entering a prescription request; and

a processor coupled to the means for entering, the processor:

receiving a plurality of prescription requests;

creating a queue of prescription requests from the received plurality of prescription requests, each prescription request in the queue eligible to be filled by a central fill inventory;

converting the queue of prescription requests to a transmission format; and

transmitting the converted queue of prescription requests to a central fill prescription processing system that dispenses a plurality of drugs from the central fill inventory via one or more shipments based, at least in part, on the transmitted queue of prescription requests, the central fill inventory remote from the pharmacy prescription processing subsystem.

10. (Previously Presented) A central fill prescription processing system, comprising:

a central fill inventory; and

a processor coupled to the central fill inventory and operable to:

receive a queue of prescription requests in a predetermined transmission format from a pharmacy system;

convert the queue of prescription requests from the predetermined transmission format to a processing format;

fill a plurality of prescription requests in the queue of prescription requests from the central fill inventory; and

dispense a plurality of drugs from the central fill inventory via one or more shipments, the dispensed plurality of drugs associated with the plurality of filled prescription requests and the central fill inventory remote from the pharmacy system.

11. (Previously Presented) A pharmacy prescription processing method, comprising the steps of:

receiving a plurality of prescription requests;

creating a queue of prescription requests from the received plurality of prescription requests, each prescription request in the queue eligible to be filled by a remote third party central fill inventory;

converting the queue of prescription requests to a transmission format; and

transmitting the converted queue of prescription requests to a central fill prescription processing system that dispenses a plurality of drugs from the central fill inventory via one or more shipments based, at least in part, on the transmitted queue of prescription requests.

12. (Previously Presented) A central fill prescription processing method, comprising the steps of:

receiving a queue of prescription requests in a predetermined transmission format from a remote third party provider;

converting the queue of prescription requests from the predetermined transmission format to a processing format;

filling a plurality of prescription requests in the queue of prescription requests from a central fill inventory; and

dispensing a plurality of drugs from the central fill inventory via one or more shipments, the dispensed plurality of drugs associated with the plurality of filled prescription requests.

13. (Previously Presented) A method for processing prescription requests comprising:

a pharmacy prescription processing subsystem:

receiving a plurality of prescription requests, at least one of the prescription requests received from a physician and at least one of the prescription requests received from a patient;

creating a queue of prescription requests from the received plurality of prescription requests, each prescription request in the queue eligible to be filled by a central fill inventory, the central fill inventory remote from the pharmacy prescription processing subsystem;

converting the queue of prescription requests to a transmission format;

transmitting the converted queue of prescription requests to a central fill prescription processing subsystem;

the central fill prescription processing subsystem:

receiving the converted queue of prescription requests;

converting the queue of prescription requests from the transmission format to a processing format;

filling a plurality of prescription requests in the queue of prescription requests from the central fill inventory; and

dispensing a plurality of drugs from the central fill inventory via one or more shipments, the dispensed plurality of drugs associated with the plurality of filled prescription requests.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 13, wherein the transmitting step comprises transmitting the converted queue of prescription requests with at least one Unix Tunnel Daemon.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 13, wherein the transmitting step comprises transmitting the converted queue of prescription requests with at least one STP Daemon.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 13, wherein the transmission format comprises a packet data format.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of entering at least one of the plurality of prescription requests to the pharmacy prescription processing subsystem with an IVR system.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of processing a claim for payment for at least one of the plurality of prescription requests.

19. (Previously Presented) A method for processing prescription requests, comprising the steps of:

entering at least a first prescription request into a queue of prescription requests to be filled;

determining if the first prescription request is eligible to be filled from a remote third party central fill inventory;

if the first prescription request is eligible to be filled from the central fill inventory, determining if the first prescription request can be filled by a brand name drug from the central fill inventory;

if the first prescription request is not eligible to be filled from the central fill inventory, assigning the first prescription request to be filled from a local inventory;

if the first prescription request can be filled by the brand name drug from the central fill inventory, assigning the brand name drug to fill the first prescription request;

if the first prescription request cannot be filled by a brand name drug from the central fill inventory, determining if a second drug from the central fill inventory can be substituted for the brand name drug;

if the first prescription request can be filled by a second drug from the central fill inventory, assigning the second drug to fill the first prescription request;

if the first prescription request cannot be filled by a second drug from the central fill inventory, assigning the first prescription request to be filled from the local inventory;

if the first prescription request has been assigned for filling from the central fill inventory, sending the prescription fill queue including at least the first prescription request to a dispensing system associated with the central fill inventory for filling and shipment.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 19, further comprising the step of:

if the first prescription request has been assigned for filling from the central fill inventory, sending billing information associated with the first prescription request to a payment system.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, if a claim for payment associated with the first prescription request is not paid by the payment system within a predetermined amount of time, further comprising generating an error message to report that the claim has not been paid.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 19, wherein the step of sending the prescription fill queue including the first prescription request to the dispensing system associated with the central fill inventory for filling comprises conveying at least one data packet including the first prescription request using at least one Unix Tunnel Daemon or at least one STP Daemon.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 19, wherein the prescription fill queue comprises a plurality of prescription requests, at least one of the prescription requests requested by a physician and at least one of the prescription requests requested by a patient.

24. (Previously Presented) A method for processing prescription requests, comprising the steps of:

receiving a plurality of prescription requests to be filled from a remote third party pharmacy system;

selecting at least one prescription request from the plurality of prescription requests;

determining if a central fill inventory has adequate inventory to fill the first prescription request;

if the central fill inventory has adequate inventory to fill the first prescription request, allocating a dispense quantity for the first prescription request;

if the central fill inventory has inadequate inventory to fill the first prescription request, generating an error message to report that the central fill inventory has inadequate inventory to fill the prescription request;

if a dispense quantity has been allocated for the first prescription request, dispensing the dispense quantity from the central fill inventory via one or more shipments.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 24, further comprising the steps of:

initiating an order pull for the plurality of prescription requests, the plurality including the first prescription request having an allocated dispense quantity;

generating at least one packing slip associated with the order pull; and

substantially affixing the first packing slip to a tote, the tote including the dispensed quantity from the central fill inventory, and the tote destined for a predetermined store.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 24, further comprising the steps of:

initiating an order pull for the plurality of prescription requests, the plurality including the first prescription request having an allocated dispense quantity; and

generating a summary manifest report including a plurality of orders associated with the order pull.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 19, the first prescription request requested by a prescriber.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 19, the first prescription request requested by a pharmacy customer.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 12, further comprising sending at least one of the shipments to a pharmacy and one of the shipments to the provider.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 24, further comprising sending at least one of the shipments to a pharmacy location associated with the pharmacy system.